

**Kate Brown**  
Governor



**Oregon Commission on Black Affairs**  
"Advocating Equality and Diversity"  
1819 SW 5th Ave., Portland, OR 97201  
O 503.302.9725/F 503.473.8519  
Email: [oaco.mail@oregon.gov](mailto:oaco.mail@oregon.gov)  
Website: [www.oregon.gov/OCBA](http://www.oregon.gov/OCBA)

Testimony in Support of SB 416  
March 1st, 2017, HR A, 3:00pm  
Senate Committee on Workforce

Chairs Sen. Taylor and Sen. Knopp,

The Oregon Commission on Black Affairs (OCBA) is urging approval of SB 214 which will protect the prevailing wage rate laws by enabling BOLI to do so.

The mission of the OCBA is to work for the implementation and establishment of economic, social, legal and political equality for Oregon's African American and Black communities. BOLI has been a key partner in the success of our economic mission for Oregon's African American communities. With BOLI, the OCBA has worked towards the goal of advancing the economic opportunities for African American and Black populations. We have conducted joint research including the 2015 report *Labor Agreements as Solution for Increasing Job Opportunities for African American and Females in Construction Trades in Oregon*. The intent of this report was to continue to discover through policy, data collection, and other methods, solutions that would expand opportunity for Oregon's African American and Black construction trades workers.

The legislature should consider how prevailing wage laws are effecting African American and Blacks in the construction trades. Our research highlights several key disparities: African American and Black workers are much more likely to work in the lowest prevailing wage construction trades, building trade apprentice completion is half the rate of their White counterparts, and public projects are often the best opportunities that African American and Black construction trade workers have to complete work hours in this industry. This bill will advance important goals of that are needed today to protect workers in Oregon, including communities that are most vulnerable.

OCBA believes that this law will take the necessary steps to positively impact the work opportunities for all Oregonians by ensuring that public works and private projects maintain the prevailing wage as they were intended to do.

Thank you for your positive consideration of SB 416.

Sincerely,

Chair, James Morris

**OR Commission on Black Affairs**

**Chair:**

James Morris

**Vice Chair:**

Robin Morris Collin

**Commissioners:**

Mariotta Gary-Smith

Kayse Jama

Musse Olol

Gwendolyn Trice

**Legislative Liaisons:**

Sen. Rod Monroe

Rep. Vacant

**Staff:**

Lucy Baker, Administrator

Nancy Kramer, Executive Asst.

Ty Schwoeffermann, Policy Analyst